

# Large Print Version

## Welcome to Tyntesfield

Hello and Welcome to your Pre Visit Information. We are glad that you are planning to visit Tyntesfield and in this pack we aim to give you some useful information about the estate so you can prepare for your visit and have some idea of what to expect.

## Introduction

Tyntesfield is one of the last great Victorian Gothic Revival Country estates to survive in this country! The National Trust only gained possession of the property in the last six years. Rather than shrouding the house in scaffolding for years until it was “perfectly” ready to accept visitors, the Trust was determined to incorporate the public in the discovery and challenges of conservation, so it opened the house only ten weeks after it purchased the property! Six years on, there is still a lot to do, but it is an exciting and ongoing project which we want visitors to be a part of and witness.

## Property History

Tyntesfield was purchased by William Gibbs at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; William and his family moved into the house in the 1840s. Four generations of the Gibbs family lived at Tyntesfield until the death of the Late Lord Wraxall in 2001.

## The Appearance of Tyntesfield House

Tyntesfield is a Gothic Revival structure and therefore aesthetically, it is not symmetrical like classical structures. Instead, Tyntesfield is visually busy with a lively picturesque outline comprising of undulating façades, pointed Gothic arches, spires, turrets, chimneys and pinnacles. Therefore, it is an exciting structure!

It is fair to say Tyntesfield has the look and feel of a church visually and atmospherically. On the outside and inside, Tyntesfield is rich with beautiful detail in carving and decoration.

One of the important things to remember about Tyntesfield is that William and Matilda Gibbs (1<sup>st</sup> generation) were deeply religious people and members of the Oxford movement. Therefore, the decoration and appearance of Tyntesfield is largely inspired by nature because nature was thought to be God’s creation.

Therefore, throughout the house one will come across lots of carving of

fruits, flowers, nuts, animals, foliage. For example, on the outside of the porch, lizards and dragon flies crawl on capitals.

Tyntesfield has survived with much of its original interiors and art collection intact - an exceptional treasury of Victorian life and culture. The house is not a time capsule, but a reflection of the fashions, tastes and social lives of each generation.

### **Visitor Tour**

The visitor tour of the mansion goes round the main family reception rooms on the Ground floor of the house and ends, by entering the servants ground quarters.

The visitor will begin their tour by entering the front door into the Cloisters (entrance lobby) and will then proceed to go round the Library, Oak Room, Dining Room, Main Hallway, Morning Room, Drawing Room, Oratory, Mrs Gibb's Sitting Room and the Billiard Room.

Near the end of the tour you will go round some of the Servants Quarters, such as the Butlers Pantries, Still Room, House Keepers Sitting Room, the main Kitchen and the tour ends in the Scullery. You will enter 16 rooms all together.

### **Things to bear in mind when going round the house**

Tyntesfield is a Gothic Revival Mansion and many of the colours in the rooms are dark and rich such as in the Library which has a large wooden oak ceiling and the Drawing Room which is a spectacle of deep red on the walls, carpets and curtains.

Therefore, when you go around the house, each room will have a different feel, light level and atmosphere. Because of conservation, we do have to close the shutters and blinds in most rooms therefore; most of the spaces will seem dark, most notably in the Library, Dining Room and Drawing Room.

Please note that there are rope barriers in some of the rooms, sometimes preventing a large amount of movement in that particular room. This will be made clear when you go around the house, and is mainly carried out to preserve the collection.

Always remember when going around Tyntesfield that there is a lot of exquisitely carved wood and stone and therefore each room is rich with detail which each Room Interpreter will vocally explain when you enter each room.

### **Your Visitor experience at Tyntesfield**

At Tyntesfield, Room Interpreters are currently present in each room of the visitor tour. They give a five minute talk about the room, its relevance and history. They will therefore introduce you to each of the generations of the family, and the themes of interest in the house such as the Gibbs Family; continuity and changes in taste and fashion; National Trust conservation projects and Innovation.

Before you enter the main entrance of the house, a volunteer will give you a brief background into how Tyntesfield came into the possession of the Gibbs family. Please do not feel you have to listen to every Room Interpreter if you do not wish; you are always free to go at your own pace.

### **Visitor Experience 2009**

After six years of fundraising and planning while opening to 350,000 visitors, the essential work to re-roof, re-wire and re-plumb the house and chapel is now starting. During this Conservation in Action project, visitors will be treated to a fascinating insight into the technology of Tyntesfield and discover, with our Room Interpreters, how each generation of the Gibbs' family influenced its architecture and collections

### **Directions/The Estate**

Tyntesfield House is part of the Tyntesfield Estate which you will travel through when you come to visit the house.

The main visitor entrance is from the Clevedon Road and as you come into the entrance gate you will drive for a couple of miles down the drive. On either side you will encounter North Somerset countryside with fields of linseed oil which in early summer is a sea of yellow.

At a point in the drive you will bear a right as you head for the Visitors Car Park which is sign posted and which all visitors must go to. If arriving by taxi, we would recommend you advise the taxi driver to enter the Visitor Car Park. From the Visitor Car Park it is a short distance to Visitor Reception area, however, for more direct access to the Visitor Reception area we would recommend you ask an Estate Warden to direct the taxi to the Cow Shed where you can be dropped off and then you have a short, more direct walk to the Visitor Reception Area.

The Visitor Reception area does consist of a few temporary out buildings, such as porterloo toilets, a place where you can buy refreshments, a seating area and a shop. Because Tyntesfield has only been taken over by the National Trust in the last six years, many of our Visitor Services are in temporary buildings but they are still hugely efficient and visitor friendly. Once you have purchased your ticket, you can either walk down to the

house or you can catch the mini bus. You catch the mini bus under the cow shed and a member of staff will direct you to its location when you purchase a ticket.

If you wish to walk, it is a ten to fifteen minute journey mainly down hill, although to get out of the Visitor Services area you do have to walk on a slight incline. The walk down is very beautiful and you will encounter some of the estate buildings such as The Chaplains House (a Victorian picturesque cottage) which is now a habitable holiday cottage.

Other things you can visit and do on the estate is go on a walk to the Kitchen Walled Garden which has an extensive range of glasshouses and frames, a large classical orangery, bothies, seed rooms and accommodation for gardeners.

There are Garden tours on a daily basis which are highly advisable to go on and which will enable you to find out more about the gardens and their history.

The visitor mini bus does various drop off and pick up points on the different parts of the estate. When you arrive at Tyntesfield the Visitor Services Reception team will inform you of the frequent mini bus times.

### **Further information**

We hope this information pack has been useful and we thoroughly hope you enjoy your visit to Tyntesfield. If you have any more queries or concerns, please contact the estate on 01275 461900 or visit the website on [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

Have a great trip!